



# SPRING 2024 BFA SHOWCASE

April 25-27  
Bing Theatre

Featuring performances by BFA Dance Majors in choreography by Kyle Abraham, Bret Easterling, Nina Flagg, Roderick George, Bruce McCormick, Christopher Wheeldon, and "Move Ya Body!" — a new "Dance for TV/Camera" experience.

*Pictured: Avery Zerr (BFA '26), Diego Lopez (BFA '24), Janae Holster (BFA '25)*

# A NOTE FROM **DEAN JULIA M. RITTER**

Hello, Friends!

Welcome to our Spring 2024 BFA Showcase, the culminating production of USC Kaufman's 2023-2024 academic year. This time of year is special and bittersweet. As we celebrate the hard work of our students, we also say farewell to another graduating class of BFA Dance Majors. It is only fitting that we close their tenure in style.

And this year's Spring Showcase does just that. The program you're about to see features five world premieres—one by our Claude and Alfred Mann Professor in Dance Kyle Abraham (his second choreographic collaboration for USC Kaufman), another by USC Kaufman Artist-in-Residence Roderick George, with one each from renowned faculty members Bret Easterling, Nina Flagg, and Bruce McCormick. We also have the school debut and our first piece of repertory from Tony Award-winning choreographer Christopher Wheeldon, staged by Artist-in-Residence Garen Scribner.

Finally, in the spirit of innovation, we introduce a new collaborative project that puts the focus on dance for TV/camera. This opportunity comes to us by way of Jeff Thacker, a member of the USC Kaufman Board of Councilors and the award-winning Executive Producer of 17 seasons of *So You Think You Can Dance*. Jeff introduced Kaufman dancers to a cadre of prominent dance artists, including Mandy Moore, Luther Brown, Mandy Korpinen & Elizabeth Petrin, Koko Iwasaki & Kiki Nyemchek, and Robert Roldan.

USC Kaufman students, faculty, and alumni are sharing their talents across L.A., the nation, and the globe, creating and performing with some of the most established dance companies and industry leaders anywhere.

I invite you to sit back and enjoy this amazingly talented group of dancers. Make the cheers extra loud for the graduating Class of 2024 as they leap into their careers as the performers, creators, and thinkers of the future.



Sincerely,

Julia M. Ritter, PhD, MFA  
Dean, USC Glorvia Kaufman School of Dance

# ABOUT **USC KAUFMAN**



Founded in 2012 by a transformational gift from visionary founder Glorya Kaufman, the University of Southern California created its sixth art school and, at that time, its first new school in nearly 40 years. The USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance admitted its first class in 2015 and immediately expanded USC's unique signature as a world-class research institution with a deep commitment to the arts.

The exciting opportunity to create a new school brought the chance to rethink the professional degree for the 21st century and the role of a dance school within the greater national ecology. To fulfill this monumental intention, USC Kaufman envisioned a new model of dance education, called “The New Movement”—a hybrid and collaborative approach expressed in studio practice, music, choreography, performance, new media, and scholarship, where artistic preeminence is combined with thoughtful industry access.

By encouraging interdisciplinary and collaborative work, USC Kaufman seeks to transform dance. It embraces the artistic rigor of conservatory dance instruction with the unparalleled academic opportunity offered by one of the world's leading universities.

The program encourages students to think across boundaries and take advantage of the diverse cultures both on campus and within the Los Angeles arts community. Students approach the study of dance with a global perspective, reinforced through collaboration with national and international artists.

In addition to supporting the choreographic research of a stellar faculty, the school continues to forge relationships with some of the dance world's most innovative creators. USC Kaufman dancers have had the privilege of dancing the iconic repertory of Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, and Crystal Pite, as well as working with recent Artists-in-Residence Tessandra Chavez, Peter Chu, Tyce Diorio, Justin Peck, Max Pham, Dani Rowe, Caili Quan, Toyin Sogunro, Spenser Theberge, Doug Varone, and Yin Yue, among others.

Graduates of the BFA program have secured contracts with Broadway productions, cruise ships, and dance companies including Ballet Austin, Ballet BC, Ballet Hispánico, Ballets Jazz Montréal, BalletX, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Gibney Company, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The Joffrey Ballet, LA Dance Project, Oregon Ballet Theatre, RUBBERBAND, Staatsballett Berlin, and Sydney Dance Company, among others. Alumni have also performed at the Academy Awards, Super Bowl, in movies and commercials, at Coachella and other music festivals, and on tour with artists like Kali Uchis, Olivia Rodrigo, and Jennifer Lopez. They have also gone on to pursue careers in choreography, arts administration, marketing, and business.

# STUDENT PROFILES

Scan the QR code to learn more about  
USC Kaufman's current BFA students.



Valerie Chen (BFA '24) | Photo by Rose Eichenbaum





**USC Kaufman**  
Gloria Kaufman School of Dance

**Congratulates  
the Graduating  
Class of 2024!**



# SPRING 2024 BFA SHOWCASE

April 25–27

## Within the Golden Hour

**Choreography:** Christopher Wheeldon

**Staging:** Garen Scribner

**World Premiere:** San Francisco Ballet, 2008

**Music:** Ezio Bosso

**Lighting Design:** Nathan Scheuer

**Costume Design:** Kathryn Poppen

**Faculty Répétiteur:** James Ady

**Performance:** Dancers of the Classes of 2024, 2025, 2026, & 2027

### April 25 (7:30 PM) & April 26 (2:00 PM)

Travon Carter, Tyler Chang, Valerie Chen, Jonathan Cubides, Nicole Denney, Ellery Donlon, Wyatt Florin, Caroline McAleavey, Jonacy Montero, Hayden Rivas, Ava Sine, Mia Snape, Louie Williams, Quincy Wilson

### April 26 (7:30 PM) & April 27 (2:00 PM)

Travon Carter, Carolina Centenera, Chris Chun, Ashley Chung, Wyatt Florin, Paige Litle, Caroline McAleavey, Hayden Rivas, Jasmine Robinson, Hope Patterson, Chase Peterson, Covin Washington, Louie Williams, Irena Yin

## Welcome Remarks

### L/Anding

*Exploring the duality of what was, and what is.*

**Choreography:** Nina Flagg

**Solo Choreography:** In collaboration with the Soloists

**World Premiere:** April 25, 2024

**Music Mixed/Composed by:** Nina Flagg

**Music:** The Roots: *A Peace of Light* (feat. Amber Coffman, Angel Deradorian & Haley Dekle)

Sampha: *Suspended/Can't Go Back*; RajahWild: *Motion* (Acapella Vocals);

Solange: *Cranes In The Sky*; Literatura: *Dream* (Enoo Napa Remix);

Eddy Amador: *House Music* (Acapella Vocals)

**Lighting Design:** Nathan Scheuer

**Costume Design:** Kathryn Poppen

**Faculty Répétiteur:** Shannon J. Grayson

**Performance:** Dancers of the Classes of 2024, 2025, 2026, & 2027

### April 25-27

Jaelin Born, Nina butterfly, Travon Carter, Janae Holster, Ell Horan, Benjamin Jones, Kyson Kai, Diego Lopez, Ella Melideo, Ryan Phuong, Michaela Ramirez, Andrea Rodriguez, Slaterose, Leeann Ross, Ryann Simone, Justice Wooden

# SPRING 2024 **BFA SHOWCASE**

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## **Rated Human R**

**Choreography:** Roderick George

**World Premiere:** April 25, 2024

**Music:** slowdanger

**Lighting Design:** Nathan Scheuer

**Costume Design:** Roderick George & Kathryn Poppen

**Faculty Répétiteur:** Shannon J. Grayson

**Performance:** Dancers of the Classes of 2024, 2025, 2026, & 2027

### **April 25 (7:30 PM) & April 26 (2:00 PM)**

Faith Aguilar, Ryan Amato, Emmy Berg, Sam Fine, Emily Fluker, Robert Hoffer, Benjamin Jones, John Ledwith, Julia Lowe, Samiyah Norris, William Okajima, Ella Querrey, Lincoln Seymour, Jada Vaughan, Summer Vu

### **April 26 (7:30 PM) & April 27 (2:00 PM)**

Sam Amey, Ashton Benn, Jaelin Born, Emmy Cheung, Cardin Chung, Atticus Dobbie, Jau'mair Garland, Brenan Gonzalez, Shea Hancock, Arjun Kochhar, Enzy-J'var Martin, Simone Peterson, Onye Stevenson, Jonah Tran, Xavier Williams

## **“Move Ya Body” 4 Camera**

**Creative Director:** Robert Roldan

**Contributing Choreography:** Mandy Moore, Luther Brown,

Mandy Korpinen & Elizabeth Petrin, Koko Iwasaki & Kiki Nyemchek, Robert Roldan

**World Premiere:** April 25, 2024

**Music:** “Move Ya Body : Nina Sky” - Hefa T Mix

**Lighting Design:** Savannah Harrow (film), Nathan Scheuer (stage)

**Costume Design:** Kathryn Poppen

**Camera:** Justin Epstein, Adam Agostino

**Supervising Producer & Faculty Répétiteur:** Betsy Struxness

**Executive Producer:** Jeff Thacker, USC Kaufman Board of Councilors

**Performance:** Dancers of the Classes of 2024, 2025, 2026, & 2027

### **April 25-27**

Aimee Brotten, Austin Diaz, Janae Holster, Ell Horan, Kyson Kai, Ava La France, Diego Lopez, Ella Melideo, Bella Mills, Andrew Nash, Anthony Picarello, Kali Sayles, Jalen Scriven, Malachi Ashley Stevens, Katie Tapalaga, Jayde Woodard, Mikaela Zarsky, Avery Zerr

## **15-Minute Intermission**

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## Flow Change

**Choreography:** Bruce McCormick

**World Premiere:** April 25, 2024

**Music:** *Concerto 4-3: I. The Shallows* by Jennifer Higdon performed by Time for Three & The Philadelphia Orchestra

**Lighting Design:** Nathan Scheuer

**Costume Design:** Kathryn Poppen

**Rehearsal Assistant:** Amanda Peet (BFA '24)

**Performance:** Dancers of the Classes of 2024, 2025, 2026, & 2027

### April 25 (7:30 PM) & April 26 (2:00 PM)

Aimee Brotten, Carolina Centenera, Chris Chun, Ashley Chung, Samuel Fine, Caroline McAleavey, Bella Mills, Samiyah Norris, Anthony Picarello, Malachi Ashley Stevens, Onye Stevenson, Katie Tapalaga, Covin Washington, Jayde Woodard, Irena Yin

### April 26 (7:30 PM) & April 27 (2:00 PM)

Emmy Cheung, Nicole Denney, Ellery Donlon, Emily Fluker, Enzy-J'Var Martin, Andrew Nash, Hope Patterson, Chase Peterson, Jasmine Robinson, Ava Sine, Elizabeth Smiley, Jada Vaughan, Mason Walker, Xavier Williams, Quincy Wilson, Mikaela Zarsky

## On Second Thought

**Choreography:** Bret Easterling, in collaboration with the dancers

**World Premiere:** April 25, 2024

**Music:** *Violin Concerto in D minor, WoO 23: I. In kräftigem, nicht zu schnellem Tempo* performed by Freiburger Barockorchester, Isabelle Faust, Pablo Heras-Casado, written by Robert Schumann; *Preludietto* performed by Alessandro Alessandroni; *Symphony No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 78 "Organ": I. Adagio* performed by Eugene Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra, written by Camille Saint-Saëns; *Classic Fanfare* performed by Graham De Wilde

**Lighting Design:** Nathan Scheuer

**Costume Design:** Bret Easterling & Kathryn Poppen

**Rehearsal Director:** Ashton Benn (BFA '24)

**Performance:** Dancers of the Classes of 2024, 2025, 2026, & 2027

### April 25 (7:30 PM) & April 26 (2:00 PM)

Ashton Benn, Braylon Browner, Marcel Cavaliere, Tyler Chang, Valerie Chen, Cardin Chung, Jonathan Cubides, Wyatt Florin, Ava La France, Belly Laird, John Ledwith, Emily Liu, Jalen Scriven, Lincoln Seymour, Sadie Grace Shelburne, Mia Snape, Summer Vu, Louie Williams, Avery Zerr

### April 26 (7:30 PM) & April 27 (2:00 PM)

Faith Aguilar, Sam Amey, Emmy Berg, Catherine Cruise, Atticus Dobbie, Tamar Gabelev, Brenan Gonzalez, Shea Hancock, Robert Hoffer, Julia Lowe, Lindsay Lykins, Rhaine Marquardt, Jonacy Montero, Garriss Munoz, William Okajima, Hayden Rivas, Jonah Tran, Eloise Volero, Stella Wong



# SPRING 2024 **BFA SHOWCASE**

April 25–27

## **Medulla Problems**

**Choreography:** Kyle Abraham, in collaboration with the USC Kaufman Class of 2024

**Premiere:** April 25, 2024

**Music:** Björk

**Lighting Design:** Dan Scully & Nathan W. Scheuer

**Costume Design:** Kathryn Poppen

**Faculty Répétiteur:** James Ady

**Performance:** Dancers of the Class of 2024

## **April 25-27**

Ashton Benn, Aimee Brothen, Marcel Cavaliere, Valerie Chen, Jonathan Cubides, Nicole Denney, Atticus Dobbie, Jau'mair Garland, Diego Lopez, Jonacy Montero, William Okajima, Hope Patterson, Amanda Peet, Chase Peterson, Ryan Phuong, Hayden Rivas, Ava Sine, Jada Vaughan, Louie Williams

*Visiting artists to USC Kaufman are supported in part through generous funding from The Choi Family Artists-in-Residence Fund.*

Casting and programming subject to change.  
For the most recent updates, scan the QR code.



# SPRING 2024 BFA SHOWCASE

Meet the Artists



## **Kyle Abraham**

**USC Kaufman Claude and Alfred Mann Endowed Professor in Dance  
Choreographer: Medulla Problems**

(Artistic Director, A.I.M by Kyle Abraham) and his choreography have been featured in *Document Journal*, *Vanity Fair*, *Ebony*, *Kinfolk*, *O Magazine*, *Vogue*, and *Vogue UK*, amongst other publications. Abraham is the proud recipient of a Dance Magazine Award (2022), Princess Grace Statue Award (2018), Doris Duke Award (2016), and MacArthur Fellowship (2013). In addition to performing and developing new works for his company, Abraham has been commissioned by a wide variety of dance companies, including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, The National Ballet of Cuba, New York City Ballet, Paul Taylor American Modern Dance, and The Royal Ballet. He serves as the Claude and Alfred Mann Endowed Professor in Dance at The University of Southern California (USC) Gloria Kaufman School of Dance (2021-). Abraham sits on the advisory board for *Dance Magazine* and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the inaugural Black Genius Brain Trust, and the inaugural cohort of the Dorchester Industries Experimental Design Lab, a partnership between the Prada Group, Theaster Gates Studio, Dorchester Industries, and Rebuild Foundation.



## **Bret Easterling**

**USC Kaufman Lecturer  
Choreographer: On Second Thought**

Bret Easterling's career began at the age of seven. He danced in commercial work with Angela Lansbury in *Mrs. Santa Claus*, and in Fiona Apple's music video for *Paper Bag*. He was a founding member of Teen Dance Company of the Bay Area, an original cast member of New York Stage Original's Tap Kids, and an annual performer in the *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*. Bret studied at The Juilliard School, where he received his BFA and the Hector Zaraspe Prize for Choreography in 2010. While in school, he was a formative member of Andrea Miller's Gallim Dance, and a guest performer with Buglisi Dance Theatre. Upon graduation, Bret was invited by Ohad Naharin to join the Ensemble Batsheva in Tel Aviv, Israel, and ultimately promoted to the acclaimed Batsheva Dance Company.



## **Nina Flagg**

**USC Kaufman Lecturer  
Choreographer: Landing**

As an LA native, Nina's classical Ballet and Modern Dance training began with her mother Karen McDonald and expanded to Jazz, West African, and Tap. After graduating from LACHSA and UCLA (B.A. in Sociology & Communications), Nina deepened her Hip-Hop/Street Dance training as a principal dancer with Philadelphia-based company Rennie Harris Puremovement. Over the past two decades, Nina's practice has evolved as a multi-lingual embodied conversation, explored through the lens of Hip-Hop consciousness. The plurality of her training has lent itself to a diverse career in concert and commercial dance, as well as academia. Nina has been on faculty at CalArts, UCLA, Connecticut College, and LMU. She has worked with such artists as Prince, Tina Turner, Bette Midler, Beyoncé, Chris Brown, and J Balvin. Her choreography has been featured on The Grammy's, TV Land Awards, NBC/Peacock, and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Her television appearances include The Oscars, Today Show, Good Morning America, and Netflix. In 2021, she appeared in the documentary film *AILEY*, released in theaters nationwide. Nina is currently enjoying her second year on faculty at the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance, teaching courses in Hip-Hop and Dancehall studies. As a BIPOC artist and educator, Nina remains passionate about creating curricular strategies for equitable, multi-generational engagement in dance education and live performance. ([ninaflagg.com](http://ninaflagg.com).)

# SPRING 2024 BFA SHOWCASE

Meet the Artists



## **Roderick George**

**USC Kaufman Artist-in-Residence**

**Choreographer: Rated Human R**

Native Houstonian Roderick George studied dance at Ben Stevenson's Houston Ballet Academy, The Alvin Ailey School, Miami City Ballet, LINES Professional Program, and the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts (HSPVA) in Houston, TX. Before starting his professional career, he was a bronze winner of the Youth American Grand Prix in New York City in 2005.

He was elected as a Presidential Scholar under the YoungArts Foundation in 2003 and joined Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet in 2005. He later worked with Ballett Basel/ Theater Basel in 2007 and with the Goteborg Operan DansKompani. After that, Roderick joined The Forsythe Company (TFC) in Frankfurt, Germany. He has choreographed for SUNY Purchase, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, HSPVA, Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre, Springboard Danse Montréal, University of Utah, Los Angeles Contemporary Dance Company, etc. He has appeared in *Dear White People*, Louis Vuitton SS 22 Fashion Visual, and *Hercules and Love Affair* music video alongside being a freelance artist.



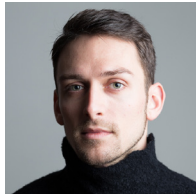
## **Bruce McCormick**

**USC Kaufman Associate Professor of Practice**

**Choreographer: Flow Change**

Bruce McCormick is a choreographer, performer, educator and scholar. He earned his BFA from The Juilliard School and his MFA from the University of Washington, where he was also on faculty. He performed in twelve countries on four continents as a member of Les Grands Ballets

Canadiens, the Bavarian State Ballet, and the Bern Ballet, where he was a soloist and ballet master. He also served as Assistant Artistic Director of North Netherlands Dance and Guest Rehearsal Director with Ballet BC. McCormick has choreographed throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia for the concert stage, opera, site-specific work and film. In 2018, he joined the faculty of the University of Southern California Gloria Kaufman School of Dance where he serves as Associate Professor of Practice in Ballet Technique. McCormick's research interests incorporate leadership, pedagogy and anatomy within the contexts of ballet, partnering and rehearsal direction. Additionally, he is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist.



## **Garen Scribner**

**USC Kaufman Artist-in-Residence**

**Répétiteur: Within the Golden Hour**

Garen Scribner is a producer, manager, and repetiteur based in Los Angeles. As a dancer, he starred in the Broadway and National Tour productions of *An American in Paris* after a decade as a soloist with the San Francisco Ballet and artist of Nederlands Dans Theater 1. His broadcast television

series *Broadway Sandwich* for PBS has been nominated for 6 NY Emmy Awards and *VOGUE* called his film *Corps-en-tine* for The Australian Ballet "one of the best things to come out of quarantine." Today, Garen runs Pilot MGMT, an artist management and production company representing world-class talent from across the industry. He is also the managing director of the San Francisco Dance Film Festival. Garen holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard University.

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Meet the Artists



## **Christopher Wheeldon**

### **Choreographer: *Within the Golden Hour***

Christopher Wheeldon, OBE (Director & Choreographer) trained at The Royal Ballet School, he joined New York City Ballet in 1993 and was named first resident choreographer. Christopher has created productions for The Royal Ballet and major ballet companies worldwide. He has choreographed for opera, film and television and is an Olivier Award winner for his ballets

*Aeternum* and *Polyphonia*. In 2014, Mr. Wheeldon directed and choreographed the musical version of *An American in Paris*, which had productions in Paris, on Broadway, and in London. Most recently he directed and choreographed *MJ The Musical* (2022), both winning four Tony Awards, including Best Choreography. The latter is currently on Broadway, touring in America, and opened in London's West End in March 2023.



## **Nathan Scheuer**

### **Lighting Designer**

Nathan W. Scheuer is a faculty member of the USC School of Dramatic Arts and a lighting and projection designer. Select credits include designs for The Muny, Tuacahn, Theatre Under the Stars, New York Opera Society, St. Louis Rep, Los Angeles Ballet, Barak Ballet, Capital Rep, Broadway Sacramento at Music Circus, Faculty Inc, Adirondack Theatre Festival, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Bucks County Playhouse, Arkansas Rep, TheatreSquared, Spectrum

Dance, New Theatre, and Travis Wall's Shaping Sound. Nathan has also had the pleasure of designing for Mandy Patinkin, Patti Lupone, Selena Gomez, Barry Manilow, and Alice Cooper, as well as companies such as NYC Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, Lincoln Center Festival, San Francisco Opera, and Center Theatre Group. Proud member of USA-829.



## **Kathryn Poppen**

### **Costume Designer**

Kathryn Poppen is a Los Angeles-based theatrical and dance costume designer. She is an Associate Artist with theatre dybbuk, and her designs are featured in the current touring productions *The Villainy You Teach* and *The Merchant of Venice (Annotated)*. Credits include work with

Center Theatre Group, South Coast Repertory, Atlantic Theatre Company, Geffen Playhouse, Echo Theater Company, Bootleg Theater, Pasadena Playhouse and the Garry Marshall Theatre. She holds a BFA in Theatrical Design from the University of Southern California.



# SPRING 2024 BFA SHOWCASE

Meet the Artists

## Contributing Choreography for “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera



### **Mandy Moore**

#### **Contributing Choreographer: “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera**

is a world class Choreographer, Director, and Producer who has garnered 3 Emmy Awards among her 12 collective nominations. She is best known for her groundbreaking work as a producer and choreographer on the global television hit *So You Think You Can Dance*. In 2017 Mandy made history by being the first choreographer to choreograph the Golden Globe Awards, Academy Awards, Grammy Awards and Emmy Awards in the same year! Recent projects include Taylor Swift’s *The Eras World Tour* and The 96th Academy Awards (2024), featuring the “I’m Just Ken” performance. Upcoming credits include Disney’s live action feature *Snow White* and John Krasinski’s *Imaginary Friends*.



### **Luther Brown**

#### **Contributing Choreographer: “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera**

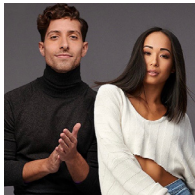
2-time Emmy nominated choreographer and creative director Luther Brown continues to take his love for dance to new heights. He is a born leader that has inspired multiple generations of dancers and choreographers across the world. His exceptional work speaks for itself and as a result, has allowed him to work with some of today’s most popular artists such as: Daddy Yankee, AI, Megan Thee Stallion, and Ozuna, to name a few. Luther has been a featured choreographer on *So You Think You Can Dance* (seasons 9–17) in the U.S., in which he was Emmy nominated for his work.



### **Mandy Korpinen/Elizabeth Petrin**

#### **Contributing Choreographers: “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera**

Mandy and Elizabeth are a dynamic and inventive choreography team. Some of their credits include *The Big Bang Theory*, *Clipped*, *Fuller House*, *Two and a Half Men*, *YMCA*, *Disney Fairytale Weddings*, *Derek and Julianne Hough’s Move Beyond Tour*, and *So You Think You Can Dance*. Other acclaims include choreography nominations for their routines from *SYTYCD*, *World of Dance Awards* and *World Choreography Awards*. In addition, they enjoy teaching at various conventions and studios around the country.



### **Koko Iwasaki/Kiki Nyemchek**

#### **Contributing Choreographers: “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera**

Koko Iwasaki was born in Kanagawa, Japan. Through her years of dancing, Koko trained in all styles of dance and began her professional dance career at the age of 16. She has worked with artists such as Rihanna, Nicki Minaj, JBalvin, Becky G, Luis Fonsi, and Camila Cabello. In addition to appearances with artists, Koko went on world tours with artists such as Luis Fonsi and Maluma and also dance tours such as *So You Think You Can Dance* and *Dancing With The Stars*.

Kiki Nyemchek has been in the Ballroom industry with over 25 years of experience on an international level as a competitor. He is an active teacher, performer and choreographer. Throughout his career he has achieved numerous National titles and is one of the top ranked Latin dancers in the world. He has performed and choreographed on several television shows including *So You Think You Can Dance*, *Dancing With The Stars*, and *Masked Singer*. With a deep passion for teaching and educating, he continues to spread his love for the art of Ballroom.

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## Contributing Choreography for “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera



### **Robert Roldan**

#### **Creative Director: “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera**

Robert is from Thousand Oaks, California. As a dancer after graduating from high school he joined the Contemporary Ballet Company “Bad Boys Of Dance” as a soloist. Shortly after in 2010, Robert joined the multi Emmy Award winning show *So You Think You Can Dance* where he became a Top 3 finalist on Season 7. He returned as an All Star for the next seven seasons, where *The Mirror* routine, with JT, went viral, receiving over 93 million hits!

Robert choreographed three seasons of *SYTYCD* and became an Associate Producer for two seasons. He recently was the Associate Director and Choreographer on the *Dancing With The Stars Live Tour*.

## Executive Producer for “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera



### **Jeff Thacker**

#### **Executive Producer: “Move Ya Body” 4 Camera**

#### **USC Kaufman Board of Councilors**

Jeff Thacker is one of British Television’s foremost and elite Entertainment Producers and former head of Music Programming on ITV. His background as a dancer, choreographer, and producer has enabled him to work with the biggest names in the music and entertainment industry. Throughout his career, his own programs have won numerous prestigious awards including a BAFTA, an EMMY, the Bronze Rose at Montreux, two Television Press Awards and a “Mention Speciale” at the television festival in Montreux. He has also received additional nominations for two Emmys and three BAFTA Nominations. He’s won The New York Film and Television Award, five consecutive Record of the Year Awards, and two National Music Awards for his contributions to music. For *So You Think You Can Dance* alone, he received five consecutive Emmy nominations between 2011-2015 as Executive Producer. Jeff was Showrunner/Executive Producer on the CBS show *Come Dance With Me*. In 2022, Thacker was honored to be invited onto the Board of Councilors here at USC Kaufman.

### **A note on “Move Ya Body”**

Experience: “The fact or state of having been affected by or gained knowledge through direct observation or participation.”

“I wanted the students to ‘experience’ and apply some basic principles dancing specifically for the TV camera. To perform ‘to’ and connect ‘through’ a lens is a craft dancers must acquire and be competent in should TV become their career. We only ‘scratched the surface’ this time, but hopefully tonight will show what is possible to achieve and accomplish moving forward. Thanks to the choreographers involved and everyone at USC Kaufman for giving us time to ‘experience’ and ‘experiment!’” —*Jeff Thacker*

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## Meet the Faculty Répétiteurs



### **James Ady**

**USC Kaufman Lecturer**

**Répétiteur: *Within the Golden Hour, Medulla Problems***

James Ady began dancing when he was 15 in Clinton, Iowa, before attending the North Carolina School for the Arts his junior and senior years of high school. After graduating from NCSA, he trained at the San Francisco Ballet School before joining Pennsylvania Ballet in Philadelphia. Ady danced numerous lead roles before leaving in 2002 to join American Ballet Theatre. While with ABT, he performed in *Swan Lake*, *Le Corsaire*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *La Fille Mal Gardée*, and toured nationally and internationally with the company. During his time with ABT, he worked with Lar Lubovitch, Natalia Makarova, Stanton Welch, James Kudelka, Georgina Parkinson and David Parsons. Ady returned to Pennsylvania Ballet in 2003 as a soloist and was promoted to principal dancer in 2005.

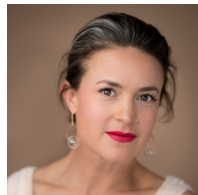


### **Shannon J. Grayson**

**USC Kaufman Assistant Professor of Practice**

**Répétiteur: *Landing, Rated Human R***

Shannon Grayson is a graduate of Howard University and performed professionally with Muntu Dance Theatre and Winifred Haun & Dancers. She has held teaching positions with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago (HSDC) with the Lou Conte Dance Studio, HSDC Youth Dance Program, HSDC Education & Community Programs and HSCD Professional Pilot Program. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Columbia College Chicago and Dominican University, River Forest, Ill. In Los Angeles, she has assisted Sarah Anindo Marshall, performed with the Marshall Dance Company and continues to work as freelance choreographer and performer. She continues to train and teach extensively in various techniques including Hip Hop, Jazz, Tap, Modern, Contemporary, Ballet, African, Afro Cuban, and Dunham Technique.



### **Betsy Struxness**

**USC Kaufman Lecturer**

**Supervising Producer & Répétiteur: *“Move Ya Body” 4 Camera***

Betsy Struxness is an interdisciplinary artist, entertainer and educator. Raised in the professional arts communities of Kansas City (KC Ballet, Lyric Opera, Starlight Theater) and with a BFA in Dance from The Juilliard School, Struxness forged a career on Broadway, appearing in *Wicked*, *Memphis* and originating hit shows like *Matilda* and most notably, *Hamilton*. Struxness's talents extend well beyond dance and stage with her continued work on screens small and large, as actor, voice actor, creative leader or performer. Her debut pop album, *Physical Attention*, which she co-wrote, is available on all music platforms. A New Yorker at heart, Struxness currently lives in Los Angeles and is a lecturer at the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance. Follow along on all of her adventures! @be\_strux.

USC Kaufman  
Glorya Kaufman School of Dance

10

SAVE  
THE  
DATE

USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance  
invites you to our

**10th Anniversary Gala**  
**Saturday, May 3, 2025**

Join us as we celebrate a  
decade of dance at USC.





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